



South Carolina's Largest One-Day Cleanup
of Our Beaches and Waterways

Site Captain Manual



NOTE: This Site Captain Manual is provided to assist volunteers in planning their South Carolina Beach Sweep/River Sweep cleanup event.

This version of the manual addresses common questions about being a site captain and includes guidance and suggestions as are offered to site captains each year; however, this version does not include information that might vary from year to year, such as specific dates, staff names and numbers, and the list of sponsors.

Each year the Site Captain Manual is updated and a copy of the revised manual is sent to those who register in that year to be a site captain with Beach Sweep/River Sweep.

Role of the Site Captain

Site captains are the people who make Beach Sweep/River Sweep happen. They are the local leaders who choose a place to cleanup and organize a group of volunteers to get the cleanup job done.

The key responsibilities of a site captain are (1) recruiting and organizing volunteers, (2) identifying a littered water body or water-access sites that needs a cleanup, and (3) reporting the data from your cleanup.

Site captains usually recruit their volunteers from groups they are associated with including, civic clubs, neighborhood groups, recreation clubs, families, school groups, church groups, and youth groups. If you choose to be a site captain the program coordinators at the S.C. Department of Natural Resources or the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium can assist you in recruiting volunteers by forwarding you the names of people in your area who have contacted us to volunteer for a Sweep cleanup.

Places selected for cleanups will include boat landings, parks, and trails that are located on public waterways, rivers, lakes, swamps, marshes, and beaches. Boating groups will often choose to clean sections of a river or a lake shoreline and sometimes an island. If needed, program coordinators at the DNR or Sea Grant will assist you in finding a site to clean.

Safety of participants should be the number-one priority, so the site captain will want to choose a site that is suited to the abilities of his/her group of volunteers. Site captains are advised to be familiar with their cleanup site and to scout the site prior to their cleanup event to identify potential safety hazards. The site captain should plan and organize for safety and communicate safety to all volunteers (see Planning for Safety, below).

Site captains will receive a packet of information and supplies, which is usually mailed in early September and includes the site captain manual, data cards to tally litter collections, garbage bags, a complementary BSRS t-shirt, and an order form to get additional t-shirts. Instructions for filling out the data cards are included in the packet. Reporting your data (the results of your cleanup), either through email or the post office, helps South Carolina track its success each year.

Optional Actions for Site Captains: To enhance their cleanup event, site captains may want to contact the local media for press coverage. Suggestions about communicating with news media and generating publicity are provided below. Site captains may also want to get local sponsors to provide in-kind donations as perks for their Sweep volunteers. Examples of donations and perks include: grocery stores donating water or soft drinks, local restaurants donating lunch or coupons for ice cream cones, parks or museums providing complementary admission passes, and local hardware or department stores donating gloves. These ideas are optional but many site captains enjoy doing this as part of their own Sweep event.

News Media Information

The following information will be useful if your local news media contacts you.

Beach Sweep/River Sweep is a not-for-profit volunteer effort that relies on organizers, sponsors, and volunteer participants. Please make the following distinctions when talking with the media:

- ✓ The **organizers** that donate funds, staff time, and resources to the Sweep are:
South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
- ✓ Numerous businesses and organizations **sponsor** this effort with monetary and in-kind donations.
- ✓ Area groups or individuals **volunteer** on the day of the Sweep to pick up debris.

All of these entities deserve credit for their efforts. However, we especially want to recognize the generosity of the **sponsors** and let them know we appreciate their support. Sponsors who donated money may become concerned when they read a local news story that identifies a local club or organization as “sponsoring” Beach Sweep River Sweep. They wonder why their name has been left out.

We encourage you to do your best to give credit to those who make the Sweep possible. If credit is not given, we may lose the organizations whose contributions make future Sweeps possible. Please remember to mention the organizers and sponsors when you speak with your local media. Major sponsors for the sweep are featured on the S.C. Sea Grant website --
<http://www.scseagrant.org/Content/?cid=49#sponsor>

Contributions

Area businesses may ask you about making a contribution to the local cleanup. If so, we ask that all donations come through the Beach Sweep/River Sweep account (a non-profit account) for several reasons. This account ensures clear records for tax-exempt status and auditing; uses donations primarily for educational materials which can be printed at a lesser cost and more efficiently through state contracts; and makes certain that donors' names are used in promotional materials and reports, and that donors are properly thanked.

We do not want to disappoint any donor by failing to give proper credit. Please ask all potential donors with monetary or in-kind contributions to contact: Susan Ferris Hill, S.C. Sea Grant Consortium at 287 Meeting Street, Charleston, SC 29401 -- phone: (843) 953-2078.

Publicity

S.C. Sea Grant Consortium and S.C. Department of Natural Resources promote Beach Sweep/River Sweep on a statewide level. However, nothing is as effective as a group of local citizens voicing a concern.

We encourage you to consider the following: contact local newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations; speak to local groups; put up posters and flyers; ask your mayor to declare the third Saturday in September as the local Beach Sweep/River Sweep Day; send out a news release asking for volunteers; recruit local “celebrities” to come out and participate.

An example of a Beach Sweep/River Sweep press release is printed below. Feel free to write your own press release and contact your local media for coverage of the event. Reporters want a story with a local perspective, preferably from a local person. The value of the local touch cannot be underestimated with hometown media.

PRESS RELEASE (example)

Contacts: _____(you), local site coordinator (CONTACT NUMBER)
 _____ (SC Sea Grant), state coastal coordinator, (843) 953-2078
 _____ (SCDNR), state inland coordinator, (803) 734-9100

ANYWHERE SC Participates in Annual Beach Sweep/River Sweep Set for (date?)

ANYWHERE SC will be participating in the annual Beach Sweep/River Sweep scheduled for DATE & TIME. With the help of local cleanup coordinators, called Site Captains, willing volunteers, and generous sponsors ANYWHERE SC will join thousands of people around the state in South Carolina’s largest one-day litter cleanup of beaches and waterways. Last year thousands of South Carolinians across the state helped remove tons of litter and aquatic debris from our states’ rivers, swamps, beaches, lakes, marshes, and creeks.

Local sites participating in this year’s Beach Sweep/River Sweep event include SITES IN YOUR AREA. The statewide event is organized by the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium and S.C. Department of Natural Resources. Beach Sweep/River Sweep is held in conjunction with The Ocean Conservancy’s International Coastal Cleanup. Anyone can participate – individuals, families, schools, youth groups, civic and conservation clubs or businesses. All necessary supplies are provided. If you would like to participate, please contact LOCAL SITE CAPTAIN, the Inland Coordinator at the SCDNR at (803) 734-9100, or the Coastal Coordinator at S.C. Sea Grant at (843) 953-2078.

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Recruiting Volunteers

Recruiting people to come out and join your local cleanup is the best way to spread the word about the importance of keeping our state's waterways litter-free.

Some of you may want to divide your area into smaller zones that are more easily managed. Others may feel that is not necessary. The choice is yours, depending on how you want to structure your sweep.

If you have difficulty recruiting volunteers, please call. We may be able to supplement your efforts, though we could not substitute for them. Nothing can take the place of local efforts. Get as many volunteers as you can, however you can.

SMILE! Take Pictures! :-)

Photos are a great way to document your cleanup, so be sure to bring a camera on the day of the Sweep. You are invited to e-mail or mail your photos to your sweep coordinator and your photos will be considered for posting on the Beach Sweep/River Sweep websites of either the S.C. Department of Natural Resources or the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium.

Check out photos from past years at:

<http://www.dnr.state.sc.us/water/envaff/river/BeachSweep/index.html> or
<http://www.scseagrant.org/Content/?cid=49>

Supplies

Supplies to be sent (by early September) to site captains will include trash bags, data cards, pencils, and marine debris literature. If you haven't done so already, please contact the BSRS coordinator and let them know your approximate number of volunteers so that we can package the appropriate number of supplies.

Planning for Safety

Be sure to emphasize safety with your volunteers. Inform them of their cleanup area's bounds and encourage a buddy system. Remind volunteers that they are participating at their own risk. Every site captain station should have a first aid kit(s), emergency numbers handy, and an emergency plan. Suitable transportation should be available.

Ask volunteers to bring and wear their own gloves.

Consider these safety tips and communicate them to your volunteers:

- Wear hard sole shoes with closed toes.
- Do not go near any large barrels or drums; report the location to the site captain.
- Do not attempt to remove known or suspected toxic/hazardous materials.
- Stay out of protected natural areas.
- Avoid snakes, bees, fire ants, and poison oak and ivy. Wear insect repellent.
- Lookout for and avoid alligators, as they have become more common on our Coastal Plain rivers.
- Don't lift anything too heavy.
- Do not compact or stuff trash into the trash bags.
- Use extreme caution when picking up biohazards.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Wear sunscreen, hat, or sun visor.
- For all those on the water, practice boating safety. Wear personal flotation devices, and never try to reach for something that may cause you to fall in.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) suggests additional precautions, which are presented below.

DHEC Guidelines for Handling Special Wastes

Some wastes need special handling to protect your personal safety and the safety of the environment. These are suggestions for dealing with special wastes

Tell all volunteers this: If you encounter any trash that you are uncomfortable handling, just leave it where it is and let the site captain know about it. *And remember, always wear your gloves.*

Equipment for handling special wastes

- Gloves
- Household pliers or tongs
- 2-liter soda bottle(s)
- Plastic bags with ties/clips/rubber bands for closure

Handling special wastes:

Needles and syringes: Use tongs or pliers to pick up a needle/syringe. Place in a 2-liter soda bottle that has the DHEC syringe warning label applied. Put the cap securely back on the bottle. The cap may be removed and additional needles added until the bottle is full. Bottles with caps tightly secured may be put in regular trash disposal.

If you should stick yourself with a needle found on the beach or riverbank, the risk of getting an infection is very low. If you have not had a tetanus shot in the past 10 years, or you are not sure if you have, you should get a booster from your doctor or the local health department. Report the needle stick to your personal doctor and get advice on any additional follow-up. If your doctor has questions, he/she can consult with DHEC's epidemiologists at 803-545-4922.

Used condoms, tampons, sanitary pads: Use tongs or pliers to pick these up. Place them in double bags and close them securely. Bags may be opened and additional waste added until the bag is full. You don't need to label double-bagged, and you can add it to the regular trash collection.

Partially used paint cans: If the cans are closed and paint is usable set them aside at a collection point for donation to Habitat for Humanity. If the paint is dried, put the can in regular collection bags. If the paint is not dry, but not usable, set it aside at a collection point for proper disposal.

Used oil containers: Collect these in a bag *not mixed with other trash*. Dispose of at a county recycling station.

Used tires, refrigerators, other large appliances (white goods): Report to the site captain, so that they can be collected for proper disposal. Contact your city/county public works for the pick-up of white goods.

Paint thinner, other potentially volatile chemicals: Note the location and report to the authorities so that they can arrange appropriate disposal.

If you encounter other waste materials not listed here that look dangerous to you, leave them in place and report them to authorities at the local DHEC Environmental Quality Control office for follow-up. The DHEC emergency response staff on call for the month of September is aware that Beach Sweep/River Sweep site captains may call for technical assistance. They can be reached at 1-888-481-0125.

If you use your pliers/tongs to pick up special trash, soak them at the end of the day in Clorox (1:10 dilution) or Lysol (follow directions on label for dilution) for 10 minutes, or spray them thoroughly with Lysol to clean them for reuse.

Disposing of Trash and Debris

As most of you already know, disposal of the trash that you and your group collect on the day of the Sweep is your responsibility. Please make the proper arrangements with your local trash collection agency to pick up the trash.

Remember that many dumps and recycling centers are closed on weekends, and it may require special arrangements to have them open for this event. Some agencies agree to have special pickups on the day of the Sweep. If not, you may arrange for disposal the first day the dump or recycling center is open after the Sweep.

Others wait until the regular pickup day to collect the bagged trash left on the side of the road.

We encourage recycling. Recycling options include:

- Placing large bins in the cleanup headquarters.
- Asking local recycling offices to send a truck to pick up the collected trash.
- Appointing volunteers to sort materials and take them to a recycling center.

Data Cards

Try to get your volunteers enthusiastic about filling out the data cards. Impress upon them that the cards are one of the most important factors in the Sweep.

In the past, we asked site captains to count trash bags and use 15 lbs per bag as a standard weight to estimate the amount of trash collected. However, this information is way too general for the national Beach Sweep/River Sweep program and tends to underestimate our efforts. Therefore, we will try to use the standardized data cards this year.

If there are many volunteers at a site, have them split into teams and have one record data as the others collect and bag trash...they can switch jobs as they like. If there are few volunteers, have each collector estimate the trash they collected (i.e., about 40 glass bottles, 60 cans, 100 cigarette

butts, 10 plastic containers, etc...). Collect all data cards, fill out the new Summary data card, and send them in to the inland coordinator:

No matter how much trash you collect, please turn in the data cards. Turning in the data is crucial to determine the origin of the trash volunteers pick up. The data cards help target the problem at its source; for instance, last year we learned that cigarette butts were the most common collected trash item in South Carolina. This information helps us create educational and innovative programs aimed at eliminating the sources of litter, like cigarette butts.

Please mail your completed data cards to your Beach Sweep/River Sweep coordinator at the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium or the S.C. Department of Natural Resources.

T-shirts

Beach Sweep/River Sweep t-shirts are usually available for \$10, which includes the sales tax, shipping and handling. The money collected from the t-shirts serves as “seed” money to get the next year's Sweep underway. The shirts will feature a brand new design this year. Encourage volunteers to purchase Beach Sweep/River Sweep t-shirts in advance, if they wish to wear them on the day of your Sweep event. Keep in mind that the shirts have sold out quickly in recent years.

A t-shirt order form can be found online. Visit the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium's Beach Sweep/River Sweep website at <http://www.scseagrant.org/education>, and download the form. Fill out the order form and send it with payment to S.C. Sea Grant Consortium.

Again this year, we are providing one free t-shirt to each site captain. This is our way of saying thank you for devoting your time and energy to the program.

Thanks for your service, and have a safe, fun cleanup!

If you have any questions, please contact the South Carolina Beach Sweep/River Sweep coordinators:

S.C. Sea Grant Consortium, coastal coordinator, (843) 953-2078
<http://www.scseagrant.org/Content/?cid=49>

S.C. Department of Natural Resources, inland coordinator, (803) 734-9100
<http://www.dnr.sc.gov/water/envaff/river/BeachSweep/index.html>